

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ZAGREB 00055 280756Z

14

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 261115Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL ZAGREB

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ZAGREB 055

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, YO

SUBJECT: TRIALS FOR PERSONS ARRESTED AFTER BOMB EXPLOSION IN
ZAGREB

REF: 75 ZAGREB 934 (NOTAL)

1. A JOURNALIST FROM THE YUGOSLAV WEEKLY, "VJESNIK U SNJEDU" (VUS) RECENTLY TOLD AN OFFICER OF THE CONGEN THAT VUS HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT OPEN TRIALS MIGHT BE HELD AS EARLY AS FEBRUARY FOR THE PERSONS JAILED IN ZAGREB AFTER THE BOMB EXPLOSION LAST SEPTEMBER. THE JOURNALIST ESTIMATED THAT ABOUT 70 PERSONS ARE STILL IN PRISON HERE. THOSE ARRESTED INCLUDED THREE JOURNALISTS FROM VUS: TOMISLAV DRZIC (REFTEL), (FNU) DOBRASIN, AND ANTE JELIC (PHON)--WHO WAS RELEASED AFTER SPENDING THREE MONTHS IN INVESTIGATIVE DETENTION. THESE ARRESTS OCCURRED SO QUICKLY AFTER THE EXPLOSION, THAT THE YUGOSLAV JOURNALIST THOUGHT THAT THE POLICE HAD BEEN FOLLOWING THE GROUP PREVIOUSLY.

2. ACCORDING TO THE JOURNALIST, THE VUS STAFF WAS OFFICIALLY INFORMED OF THE ARRESTS AT A MEETING A FEW DAYS AFTER THEIR COLLEAGUES HAD BEEN TAKEN UNTO CUSTODY. ONE OF THE STATEMENTS MADE ABOUT DRZIC WAS THAT HE FREQUENTLY TRAVELLED TO VIENNA AND GRAZ, WHERE HE MET AN (UNNAMED) FORMER EMPLOYEE OF THE U.S. CONSULATE
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PAGE 02 ZAGREB 00055 280756Z

GENERAL IN ZAGREB. HE STATED THAT RUMORS REACHING VUS INDICATED

THAT DRZIC WOULD BE TRIED UNDER ARTICLE 117 OF THE YUGOSLAV CRIMINAL CODE (FORMING CRIMINAL ASSOCIATIONS) AND UNDER ARTICLE 109 (CONTACTS WITH HOSTILE EMIGRES). HE THOUGHT DRZIC WOULD PROBABLY GET A MINIMUM OF 12 YEARS IMPRISONMENT.

3. THE SOURCE, WHO DESCRIBED DRZIC AS A CASE OF "ARRESTED PUBERTY", CONFIRMED THE EVALUATION OF DRZIC'S CHARACTER CONTAINED IN REFTEL. WHEN ASSIGNED TO WRITE ABOUT CRIMINAL AND POLICE MATTERS, DRZIC ALLEGEDLY DELIGHTED IN BRINGING POLICE-TYPE GADGETS INTO THE OFFICE, INCLUDING A CAMERA WHICH TOOK PICTURES AROUND CORNERS AND MINIATURE TAPE RECORDERS AND RADIO TRANSMITTERS.

4. COMMENT: AN OPEN POLITICAL TRIAL WOULD BE UNUSUAL; THE LAST PUBLIC POLITICAL TRIAL IN ZAGREB TOOK PLACE IN 1972 AND INVOLVED PERSONS INVOLVED IN THE "CROATIAN EVENTS" OF 1971. IF THE REPORT THAT DRZIC HAD FREQUENT CONTACTS WITH U.S. OFFICIALS IN AUSTRIA IS TRUE, THE YUGOSLAVS MAY BE TEMPTED TO USE THIS SUPPOSED "AMERICAN CONNECTION" TO COUNTERBALANCE THEIR HINTS ABOUT SOVIET INVOLVEMENT WITH THE COMINFORMISTS ARRESTED IN YUGOSLAVIA IN 1975. KAISER

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